

Application No. 10/006,461
Amendment dated March 8, 2005
Reply to Office Action of November 22, 2004

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed November 22, 2004 as entered in the above-captioned matter, the applicant respectfully submits the following amendment and response.

Claims 19-24 were objected to as having informalities. Pursuant to this amendment claims 19-24 have been cancelled and are no longer presented for consideration.

Claims 25-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) given Cranston et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,902,857) ("Cranston"). Claims 1-10, 32, 33, 36, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) given Shigematsu (EP 1018695) ("Shigematsu"). Claims 44 and 45 were rejected for the same reasons as Claims 32 and 33. Claim 49 was rejected for the same reasons as Claim 1. Claim 50 was rejected for the same reasons as Claim 1 and further in view of information within the personal knowledge of the examiner. Claim 51 was rejected in view of personal knowledge of the examiner. Claims 11-13 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) given Shigematsu in view of Cranston. Claim 18 was rejected for the same reasons as Claim 11. Claims 19 and 24 were rejected for the same reasons as set forth for Claim 1. Claim 20 was rejected given Shigematsu. Claims 21-23 were rejected for the same reasons as Claim 11-13. Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) given Shigematsu in view of Cranston and Kato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4, 843, 226) ("Kato"). Claim 28 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) given Cranston. Claims 29-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) given Cranston in view of Kato. Claims 40-43 were rejected for the same reasons as Claims 1-14. Claims 15, 16, 34, 35, and 46-48 were objected to as depending upon a rejected base claim but were found to contain allowable subject matter. Claims 38 and 39 were allowed. The applicant thanks the Examiner for these indications of allowable subject matter.

In the interest of expedited prosecution, pursuant to this amendment the applicant has amended Claim 1 to include the recitations of allowable Claim 15 along with all intervening dependant claims. Independent Claim 32 is amended to include the recitations of allowable Claim 34. And, in similar manner, independent Claim 44 is amended to include the recitations of allowable Claim 46. Remaining claims that are dependant upon one of these revised independent claims are retained while other claims have been cancelled. It is the applicant's intent to file a continuation and seek allowance of presently cancelled subject matter.

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There being no other objections to or rejections of the claims, the applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-9, 12, 13, 17, 32-33, 35-39, 44-45 and 47-48 may be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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